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PHOTOGRAPHIC INTERPRETATION REPORT

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EXPANSION OF ROAD AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS LAOS PANHANDLE

NPIC/R-17/70
MARCH 1970

GROUP 1: EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION

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EXPANSION OF ROAD AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS, LAOS PANHANDLE

INTRODUCTION

A comparison of construction and maintenance over the past three years shows that the Communist logistics network in the Laos Panhandle has expanded (Figures 1-4 and Table 1). During the dry season of 1967-1968, there were 1,182 nautical miles (nm) of motorable roads and the telecommunications system covered 307 nm; in the 1968-1969 season, there were 1,470 nm and 463 nm, respectively.

The maintenance and expansion of this network are continuing into [redacted] During the early part of the current dry season, 162 nm of roads and 44 nm of telecommunications lines have been constructed. Three hundred and sixteen nm of previously existing roads have not been reopened, which probably reflects the complete deterioration of the network during the past rainy season when all of the roads were closed for the first time.

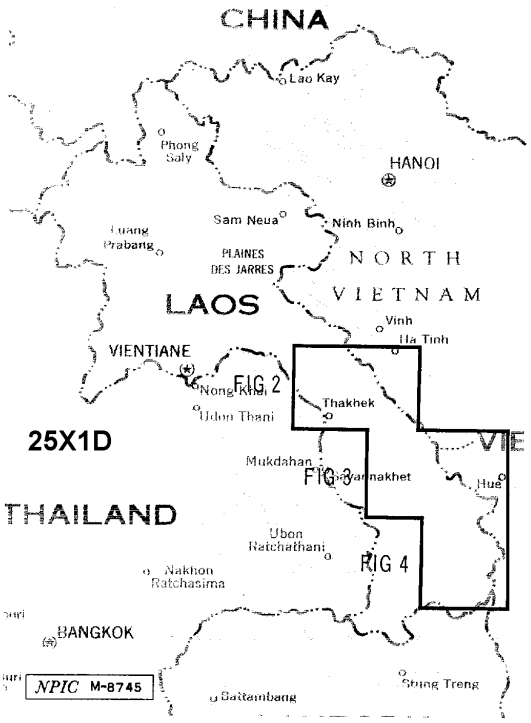

FIGURE 1. LOCATION MAP

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BASIC DESCRIPTION

1967 - 1968 Dry Season

During this period, 270 nm of roads and 307 nm of new telecommunications lines were built by Communist forces in the Laos Panhandle. These new roads, minus 91 nm of deactivated roads (portions of Routes 8, 12, and 23), increased the total length of the motorable network to 1,182 nm.

Serviceability was maintained on the northern portion of the network throughout the following rainy season. Thus, the Communists had motorable access into the A Shau Valley of South Vietnam, via Laos Route 922, during the entire period.

1968 - 1969 Dry Season

The Communists continued their rapid expansion of the networks during the 1968 - 1969 dry season by building 288 nm of new roads and 156 nm of telecommunications lines. An additional 33 nm of road construction was abandoned before completion. Seventy-five nautical miles of roads (portions of Routes 8, 12, and 23) were reactivated; however, this was offset by an equal amount of deactivated roads (portions of Routes 9, 12, 23, 92, and 925). By the end of the dry season, the total motorable network consisted of 1,470 nm.

The newly constructed open-wire lines expanded the telecommunications network to 463 nm comprised of Laos/South Vietnam Line 1 with its three branch lines, Laos/South Vietnam Line 2 with its three branch lines, and three unnumbered segments.

1969 - 1970 Dry Season

The unusually heavy rains during the first part of the 1969 rainy season, coupled with allied air strikes, closed the entire network in the Laos Panhandle. This was the first time that the entire network had been closed to through traffic since it was constructed. 25X1D

By [redacted] the Communists had already built 162 nm of new roads and 44 nm of telecommunications lines. This new construction is progressing while 316 nm of roads remain in disuse. At present, the total motorable network in the panhandle is 1,309 nm. Although this is 161 nm less than the total motorable mileage at the end of the last dry season, new construction already exceeds 50 percent of the 1968-1969 construction, with approximately three months of favorable weather remaining.

Highlights of the construction this year include the completion of the Route 913/1039 infiltration corridor, the parallel road construction along Routes 96, 912, and 110, and the construction of an additional border crossing near Ban Karai Pass.

TABLE 1. Development of Communist Logistics Network in the Laos Panhandle, 1967-1970 (distances are in nautical miles)

Time Period	Motorable Roads	Roads in Disuse	Reactivated Roads	New Roads	Total Telecommunications System	New Telecommunications
1967-1968	1,182	91	--	270	307	307
1968-1969	1,470	75	75	288	463	156
Fall 1969-Present	1,309	316	6	162	507	44

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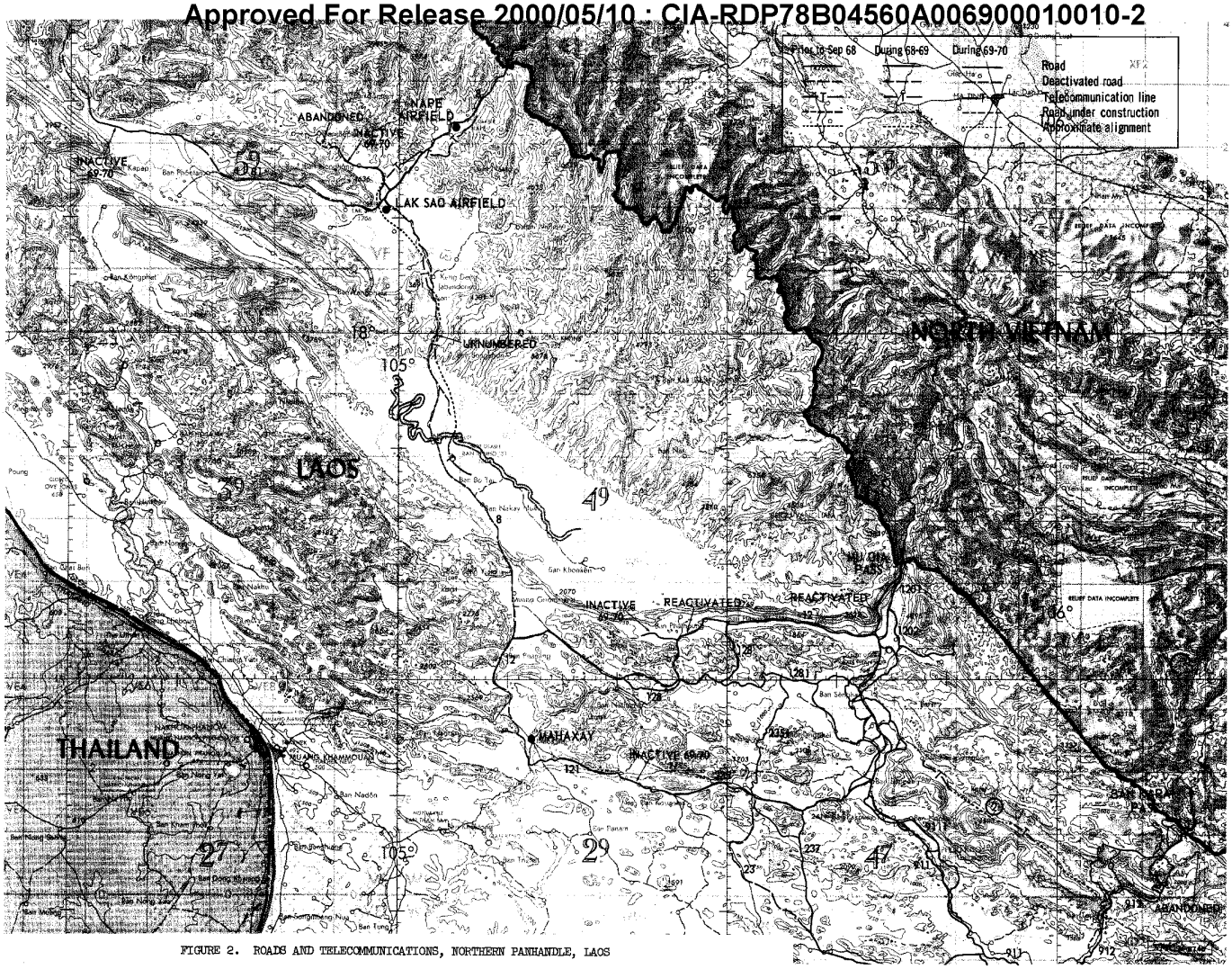

FIGURE 2. ROADS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, NORTHERN PANHANDLE, LAOS

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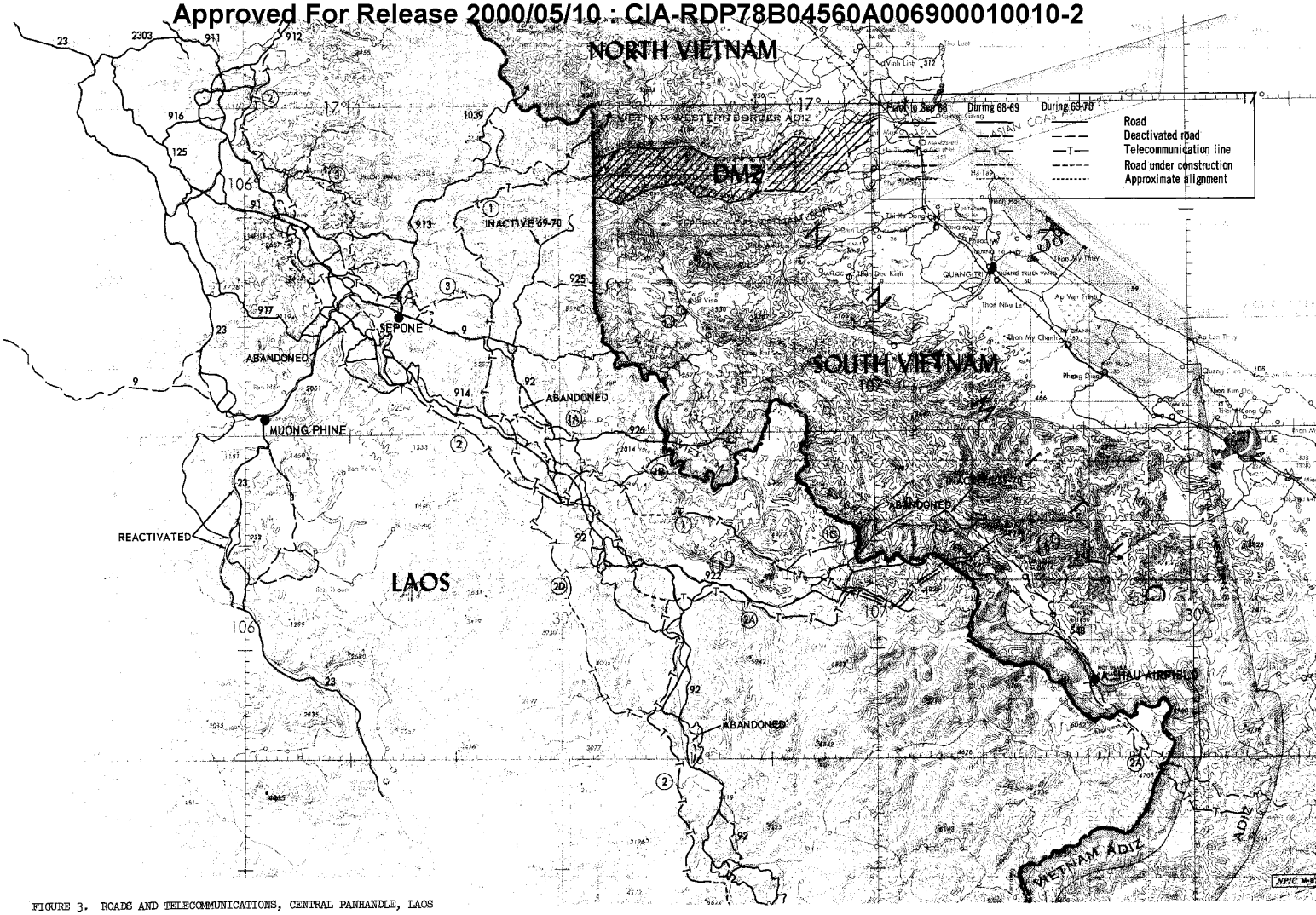

FIGURE 3. ROADS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, CENTRAL PANHANDLE, LAOS

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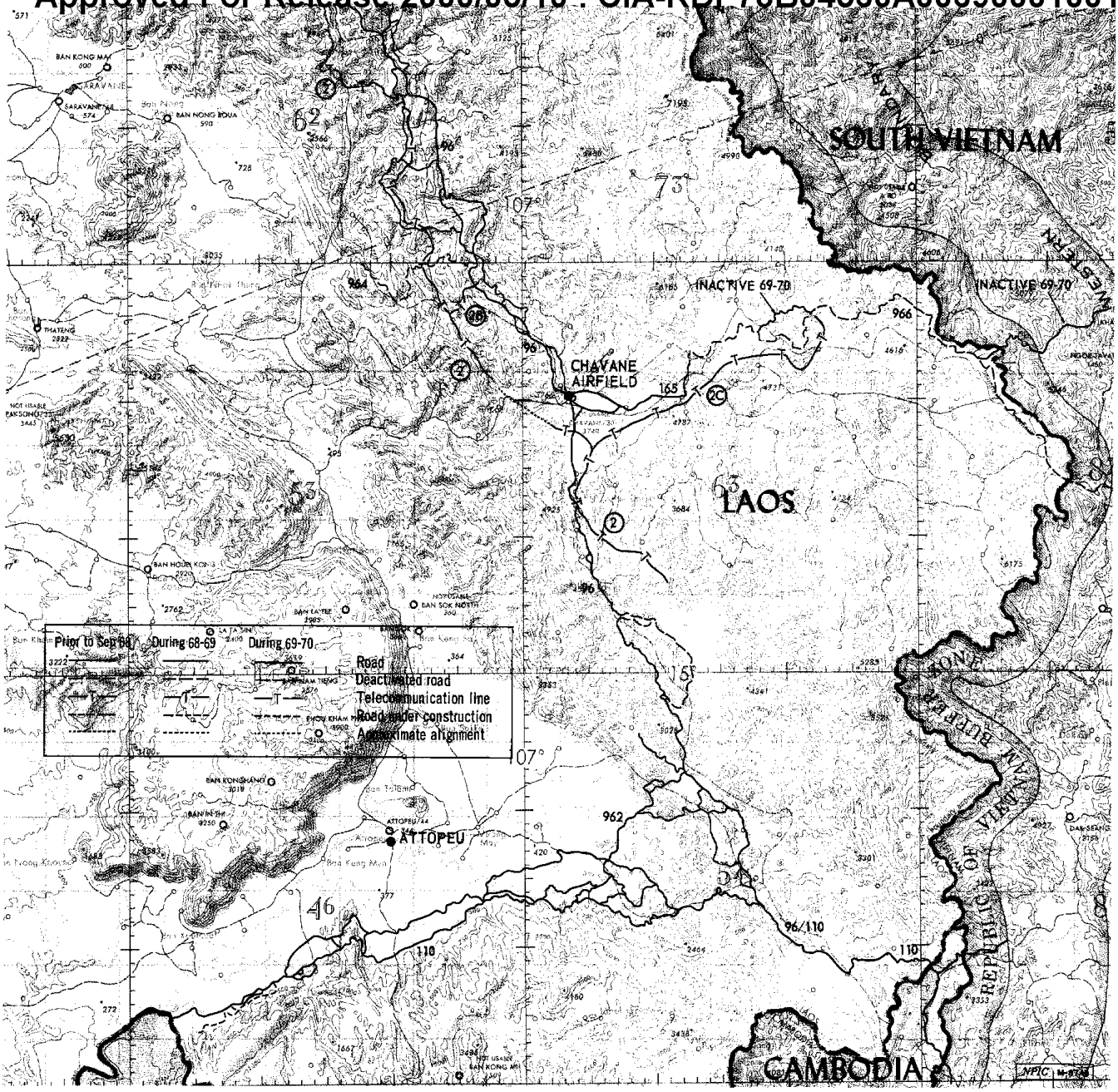

FIGURE 4. ROADS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, SOUTHERN PANHANDLE, LAOS

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REFERENCES

IMAGERY 25X1D

Numerous medium- and low-level photographic reconnaissance missions flown between [redacted] were used in compiling this report.

MAPS OR CHARTS

ACIC. Pilotage Chart, Sheet J-11D, 2d ed, Sep 67, scale 1:500,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)

ACIC. Pilotage Chart, Sheet K-10A, 3d ed, Oct 68, scale 1:500,000 (UNCLASSIFIED)

DOCUMENTS

1. NPIC. NPIC/R-8/70, Probable Dual Road Network Under Construction, Laos, Feb 70 (SECRET/No Foreign Dissem)

2. NPIC. NPIC/R-110/69, Reopening of Enemy Road Net, Laos Panhandle, Dec 69 (CONFIDENTIAL/No Foreign Dissem [redacted] 25X1C

3. NPIC. NPIC/R-89/69, Enemy Road Status, Laos Panhandle, Aug 69, (CONFIDENTIAL/No Foreign Dissem [redacted] 25X1C

REQUIREMENT

C-ERO-86, 096

NPIC Project 250688

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